

**MINUTES**  
**MICHIGAN STATE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION MEETING**  
**August 23, 2001**  
**Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan**

Meeting noticed in accordance with Open Meetings Act, Public Act 267 of 1976.

Present:      Barton LaBelle, Chairman  
                 Jack Gingrass, Vice Chairman  
                 Ted Wahby, Commissioner  
                 Lowell Jackson, Commissioner  
                 John Garside, Commissioner

                 Charles Krupka, Commission Advisor  
                 Jerry Jones, Commission Auditor  
                 Vickie Plummer, Executive Secretary  
                 Pat Isom, Assistant Attorney General  
                 Barb Hayes, Chief Administrative Officer  
                 Tom Maki, Chief Operations Officer  
                 Philip Kazmierski, Bureau of Urban and Public Transportation  
                 William Gehman, Bureau of Aeronautics  
                 Wayne Niles, Bureau of Finance and Administration  
                 Louis Lambert, Bureau of Transportation Planning  
                 Doris Byers, Office of Governmental Affairs  
                 Ari Adler, Office of Communications  
                 Jacqueline Shinn, Office of Economic Development  
                 Paul Miller, Bureau of Highway Technical Services

Absent:        Betty Jean Awrey, Commissioner

A list of those people who attended the meeting is attached to the official minutes.

Chairman LaBelle called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. in the Best Western Conference Room, Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan.

On behalf of the Commission, the Chairman thanked the Chamber of Commerce and the City of Sault Ste. Marie for their hospitality during the Commission's visit. The Chairman also thanked the United States Corp of Engineers for providing a tour of the Soo Locks.

**COMMISSION BUSINESS**

Commission Minutes

It was moved by Commissioner Wahby, with support from Vice Chairman Gingrass, to approve the minutes of July 26, 2001, as submitted. The motion carried on a unanimous voice vote.

#### 2002 Commission Meeting Schedule

Chairman LaBelle asked the Commissioners to review the proposed schedule for next year and provide comments to Charlie Krupka, Commission Advisor. Once comments have been received, the schedule will be revised and presented at the September meeting for approval and distribution.

### **OVERSIGHT**

#### Commission/State Administrative Board Contracts and Agreements (Exhibit A)

Charlie Krupka, Commission Advisor, noted that the description in Item No. 3 of Exhibit A did not include the estimated funds. A new page was submitted with corrections which now reads "State Funds \$78,870, City of Marshall Funds \$19,730, Total Funds \$98,600."

It was moved by Commissioner Jackson, with support from Commissioner Garside, to grant approval to the Department to proceed with the contract process. The motion carried on a unanimous voice vote.

#### Bid Letting Pre-Approvals (Exhibit A-1)

It was moved by Commissioner Wahby, with support from Vice Chairman Gingrass, to grant approval to the Department to proceed with the contract process. The motion carried on a unanimous voice vote.

#### Letting Exceptions (Exhibit A-2)

It was moved by Commissioner Garside, with support from Commissioner Jackson, to grant approval to the Department to proceed with the contract process. The motion carried on a unanimous voice vote.

#### Information Items (Exhibit A-3)

This item was submitted for information only and does not need approval.

#### Contract Adjustments

Paul Miller, Design Division, Bureau of Highway Technical Services, reported on the contract extras and overruns, Exhibit B.

It was moved by Commissioner Wahby, with support from Commissioner Jackson, to approve the contract adjustments. The motion carried on a unanimous voice vote.

Bureau of Highway Technical Services, Real Estate Division, Excess Property Unit Audit Report

Commissioner Wahby reported that he has reviewed the audit report and the Department's response to the report and moved, with support from Commissioner LaBelle, to approve the report and response as submitted. The motion carried on a unanimous voice vote.

**RESOLUTION 2001-03**

Chairman LaBelle announced that Vice Chairman Jack L. Gingrass is retiring from the Commission and thanked him for the fantastic job he has done in representing the Upper Peninsula, and all citizens of Michigan, during his tenure on this Commission.

Chairman LaBelle then read Resolution 2001-03, a tribute to Vice Chairman Gingrass. It was moved by Commissioner Garside, with support from Commissioner Wahby, to approve the resolution as stated. The motion carried on a unanimous voice vote.

It was then announced by the Chairman that the Ironwood rest area would be named in honor of Mr. Gingrass.

Vice Chairman Gingrass thanked the Commissioners for their support and expressed gratitude to the staff for their help over the years. He is looking forward to retirement and will celebrate his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday this week.

**PRESENTATIONS**

Superior Region Update

Randy VanPortFleet, Superior Region Engineer, provided a 2001 construction map showing the projects within the region that will be completed this construction season which includes passing-relief lanes. Upcoming projects include reconstruction on I-75, a job in Iron Mountain in which the City partnered with the Michigan Department of Transportation, and replacement of the swing bridge in Ontonogan in 2004.

International Bridge Administration

Phil Becker, General Manager of the International Bridge Administration, reported that 60 million vehicles have crossed the bridge since 1962. The Joint International Bridge

Authority, which consists of three members from Canada and three members from Michigan, provides policy oversight of the bridge. Mr. Becker introduced the Chairman of the authority, James McIntyre (Canadian member), and members Bud Mansfield (Michigan) and Allan Jackson (Canada). Mr. Becker discussed traffic is down 13 percent from last year causing a revenue slump, and noted commuter traffic is low. Capital improvement needs continue and toll collection revenues were discussed. These issues continue to be a cooperative effort between Canada and Michigan.

#### County Road Association of Michigan - Asset Management

Terry McNinch, Michigan Tech University, provided information on RoadSoft GIS, an integrated road management system for counties, cities and villages. The RoadSoft initiative in Michigan is a cooperative effort between the County Road Association of Michigan (CRAM) and the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) to develop an asset management system. RoadSoft is a simplified evaluation data collection system using windshield surveys, paper or laptops to collect data in a time efficient and cost effective way. Training and support are provided to local agencies to enable them to maintain the system. Mr. McNinch also provided some examples of the data collection screens from the program to show what type of data is collected and assessable.

#### Eastern Upper Peninsula Transportation Authority (EUPTA)

Jim Dunn, EUPTA, provided an overview of how the authority was developed. EUPTA provides public ferry transportation to Drummond, Sugar and Neebish Islands. It was noted that local funds from fare boxes are used to match federal grant funds for ferry operations. Mr. Dunn emphasized that EUPTA's personnel are conscious of their fiscal responsibility to the community while making the system safe and efficient for customers.

Chuck Mosher, EUPTA, provided information on the bus system used for public transit in this area. He noted that EUPTA supports the Welfare-to-Work and Project Zero programs and provided that the public/private relationship of EUPTA has proven successful and vital to their operation.

#### City of Sault Ste. Marie

Spencer Nebel, City Manager, Sault Ste. Marie, provided that several MDOT enhancement and airport projects have been completed within the city this year, as well as some local projects, which have had a positive impact on the community. He also discussed improvements needed on Portage Avenue, an overpass at Easterday, reconstruction of the business spur, and enhancements for a cruise boat business.

Mr. Nebel also provided a comparison chart of gas and weight tax compared to winter maintenance expenses for several communities, including three snowbelt communities in the Upper Peninsula. He then expressed gratitude to the MDOT employees he works with on a daily basis.

#### Recess

Chairman LaBelle recessed the meeting at 10:30 a.m. and reconvened the meeting at 10:40 a.m.

#### Chippewa County Road Commission

Don Holt, Chippewa County Road Commission, explained that Chippewa County is the largest county in Michigan, with roads on three islands, and approximately 1,500 miles of roadways to maintain. He noted that Chippewa County has a great relationship with MDOT, and continues to work with townships, public officials, and the Farm Bureau office, to pass millages and establish formulas to fix roads with local matching of funds. Mr. Holt expressed a need for more snow removal funds for this area, and noted his appreciation for the reconstruction project on I-75.

Mr. Holt then congratulated Vice Chairman Gingrass on his retirement, and expressed appreciation to him for all he has done to improve transportation in the Upper Peninsula.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

Chairman LaBelle adjourned the meeting at 11:00 a.m.

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Commission Advisor